

Minutes of the Meeting
January 7, 1999

Projects Reviewed

Convened: 9:30am

Newhalem Visitors Center & Interpretive Display Master Plan
Promontory Point
TT Minor
Experience Music Project (site visit)

Adjourned: 4:30pm

Commissioners Present

Rick Sundberg, chair
Moe Batra
Carolyn Darwish
Robert Foley
Jeff Girvin
Gerald Hansmire
Jon Layzer

Staff Present

Vanessa Murdock
Peter Aylsworth
Rebecca Walls

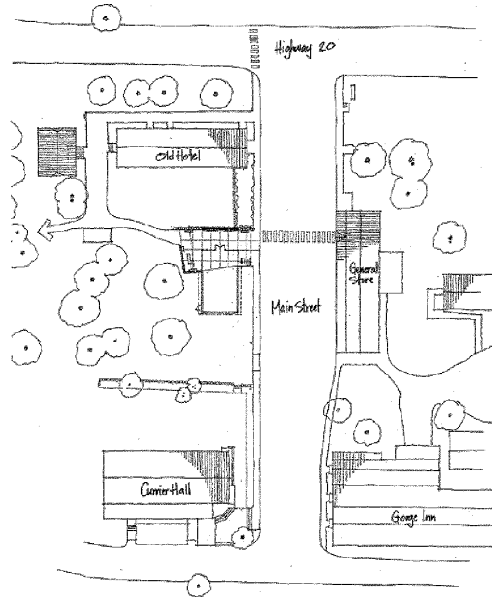
010799.1a Project: **Newhalem Visitor Center**
 Phase: Pre-Design
 Presenters: Beth Blattenberger, Seattle City Light
 Craig Curtis, Miller | Hull
 Attendees: Elaine Bild, Seattle City Light
 Hank Florence, National Park Service
 Corinne Grande, Seattle City Light
 Diane Hilmo, Seattle City Light
 Rhoda Lawrence, Boyle Wagoner Architects
 Gretchen Luxenberg, National Park Service
 Sharon Mentyka, Partners in Design
 Tom Parks, Seattle City Light
 Stephen Schlott, Partners in Design
 Time: 1 hr. (0.3%)
 Project Type: CIP 94714-01
 SDC Code: # 235a

The design team hosted a community workshop with Newhalem residents regarding the new Visitor Center project. As a result of this workshop three options for addressing the existing restroom facility and siting of the new Visitor Center were explored and developed.

Option One would remodel the existing restroom facility, remove the addition, and locate the Visitor Center on Main Street across from the General Store.

Pros: least expensive, reuses existing facility

Cons: least convenient access to restrooms, less public exposure to Visitor Center

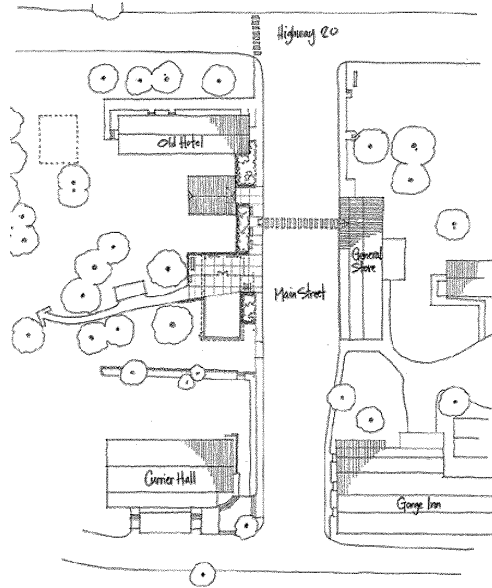


Option One

Option Two would relocate the existing restroom facility, without the addition, to Main Street south of the Old Hotel. The Visitor Center would be located to the south on Main Street.

Pros: most convenient access to restrooms, reuses existing facility, reinforces focus on Main Street, increases public exposure to Visitor Center

Cons: more costly, limits access to existing arboretum

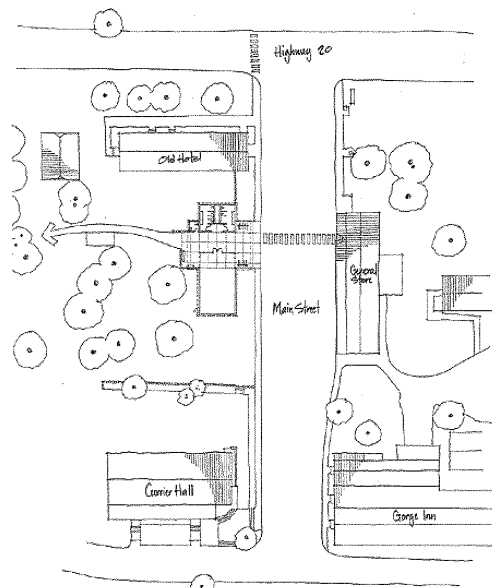


Option Two

Option Three would combine the restroom with the Visitor Center into one structure. The existing restroom building would remain and the addition would be removed.

Pros: convenient access to restrooms, best public exposure to Visitor Center, new construction

Cons: most expensive, abandons existing restroom building, fewer restroom fixtures



Option Three

Discussion:

- Hansmire:** Have you considered moving the existing restroom building to Main Street and converting it into the Visitor Center?
- Curtis:** That is one possibility that hasn't yet been considered.
- Layzer:** What is the historical value of the existing restroom structure?
- Curtis:** It is a simple clean example of the vernacular buildings found in Newhalem, however, it is not considered a contributing historic building.
- Layzer:** Will the restrooms inside be remodeled completely?
- Curtis:** Yes, even if it isn't moved, the interior fixtures and partitions will be removed or replaced.
- Batra:** I prefer option three. It seems to reinforce Main Street as the focal point of Newhalem while providing easy access to the restroom facilities.
- Girvin:** I think options two or three make the most sense. They both focus activity and vitality back to Main Street. Option one is the least desirable.
- Sundberg:** In option three, would the later addition to the restrooms be removed?
- Curtis:** Yes, the addition would be removed. However, in option three the structure is not used as a restroom facility.
- Darwish:** Perhaps option three could include child care facilities in the old restroom building with a path connecting it to the Visitor Center.
- Foley:** I prefer options two or three, but encourage the arboretum connection to Main Street rather than to the Visitor Center building.
- Blattenberger:** The new riverside trail system will extend through the arboretum and connect to Main Street.
- Florence:** In regards to moving the existing restroom building, we recommend that a new facility be constructed.
- Luxenberg:** The existing structure's non-contributing status is based on its current appearance. If the addition were removed, it would be a contributing historic resource, not on its own, but in the context of the surrounding historic district.
- Curtis:** If it is considered a contributing building, it may be appropriate to move it to Main Street.
- Layzer:** Option two is the most restrictive in terms of access to the arboretum. However, it solidifies the vision of focusing on Main Street.
- Sundberg:** I agree, both options two and three are the strongest.
- Curtis:** The existing stone wall along Main Street helps to delineate it from the arboretum.
- Foley:** The connection of the riverside trail system with the Main Street corridor will be very important.
- Action:** **The Commission appreciates the examination of new site opportunities as a result of a public workshop and the continued consideration of Main Street as the project's focal point.**
- **The Commission supports further development of options two and three as presented while recognizing possible budget constraints, and**
 - **encourages further investigation of issues regarding relocation of the existing restrooms in option two.**

010799.1b Project: Newhalem Interpretive Display Master Plan

Phase: Pre-Design

Presenters: Stephen Schlott, Partners in Design

Attendees: Elaine Bild, Seattle City Light

Beth Blattenberger, Seattle City Light

Craig Curtis, Miller | Hull

Hank Florence, National Park Service

Corinne Grande, Seattle City Light

Diane Hilmo, Seattle City Light

Rhoda Lawrence, Boyle Wagoner Architects

Gretchen Luxenberg, National Park Service

Sharon Mentyka, Partners in Design

Tom Parks, Seattle City Light

Time: 1 hr.

Project Type: CIP 94715-01

SDC Code: #235b

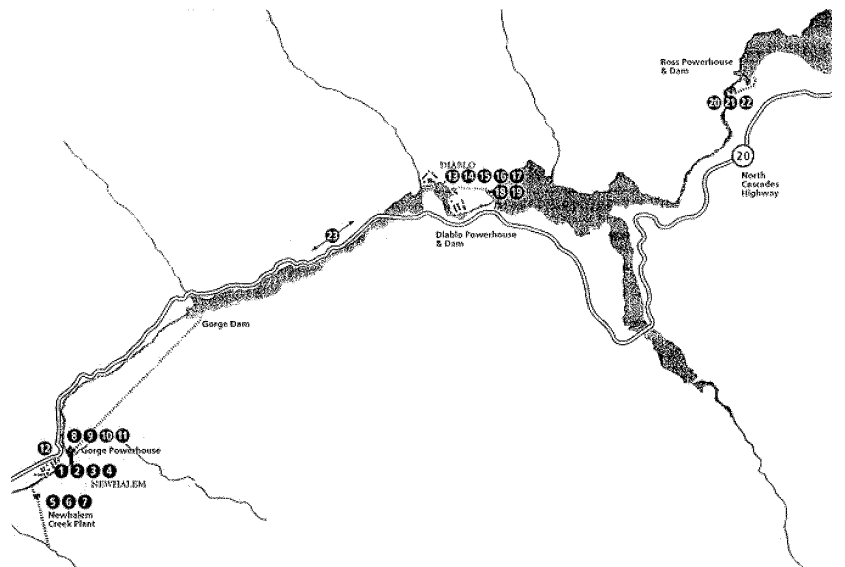
The Newhalem Interpretive Display Master Plan is comprised of multiple visitor sites that offer exposure to a variety of learning experiences. The ten mile long project will include interpretive displays at the Ross Powerhouse and Dam, Diablo, Gorge Powerhouse, Newhalem, and the Newhalem Creek Plant. The varied interpretive experiences at the different sites will be unified by the use of common display techniques and graphic standards.

The primary focus of this Master Plan is the Newhalem Visitor Center. Visible from the north end parking lot, the Visitor Center will provide a single point of easy-access

information and will contain all of the interpretive themes in one visitor experience. The overall project will be explained with links to other locations, including trails, dams, powerhouses, towns, and the river.

The Visitor Center will have outdoor displays in a small plaza space. Inside the facility will be a series of displays including a scale map of the area on the floor, a large scale dam section to display visual information, display cases, video displays, and a timeline. These displays will be based on the following five concepts that reflect the mission and message of the Skagit Project;

- The Pacific Northwest Landscape and the “Nature of Hydroelectricity”
- Taking Responsibility for the Environment —“Living with the River”
- Pride in Ownership
- History: Harnessing the “River of a Million Horsepower”
- Timeline



Skagit Project area (north ↑)

Discussion:

- Darwish:** I like the proposal. Could there be information about Main Street history and the riverside trail outside the Visitor Center?
- Schlott:** On the north side of Highway 20 near the parking area there will be extensive information regarding the area history and potential activities. It will probably include maps, signage, and orientation materials. The Visitor Center is viewed as the next major stop. The wall around the Visitor Center plaza could have National Park Service information, area photos, and information about other attractions.
- Batra:** Given that the Visitor Center is intended to be an educational facility. Why does this proposal emphasize man-made objects rather than the natural surroundings?
- Blattenberger:** The National Park Service has a Visitor Center approximately one and a half miles to the west that has extensive displays of the natural environment. In an effort to compliment their existing natural interpretive displays, we are focusing on Seattle City Light's role in the Skagit area. We will include displays about our environmental management.
- Batra:** How will the facility be protected from vandalism when unstaffed?
- Schlott:** Protecting against vandalism will have an impact on the design of displays. Any television monitors will have protective panel covers. The design will have to draw people into the Visitor Center while protecting the facility from vandalism.
- Batra:** Is there an opportunity to staff the facility with volunteers?
- Blattenberger:** We can explore that possibility. However, the populations of Newhalem and Diablo are extremely small and residents are Seattle City Light employees. Volunteers in such a remote location will be very difficult, if not impossible, to find.
- Girvin:** The displays seem rather static. Staff members could add activity to the facility. Anything that will promote activity will increase the educational value.
- Schlott:** The Master Plan contains recommendations for interactive displays. Although the project budget is extremely limited, we plan to have video and audio displays.
- Darwish:** Has a children's play area been considered?
- Curtis:** There is a playground in the arboretum.
- Blattenberger:** A play area is not in the scope of this project. The favorite place for children to play is the existing locomotive north of the General Store. A play area came up in the discussion of the Master Plan. Unfortunately the project budget doesn't allow for construction of a play area.
- Layzer:** Given the unstaffed nature of the facility, it is crucial that some displays capture the attention of children. As the Visitor Center design develops, I encourage further exploration of indoor and outdoor opportunities for child-friendly displays.
- Schlott:** The map inlaid in the floor will extend outside of the building. We will look at other ways to involve children.
- Layzer:** This design is an excellent start.
- Sundberg:** I agree. The design begins to set up visual expressions outside with the waterwheel and the map inlay. It engages visitors as they enter the building.
- Schlott:** We are also trying to program the Visitor Center plaza for winter hours and times when the facility is not open.
- Sundberg:** I encourage moving the waterwheel closer to Main Street to increase its visibility.
- Foley:** The proposed display themes seem appropriate. I support the direction of the project.

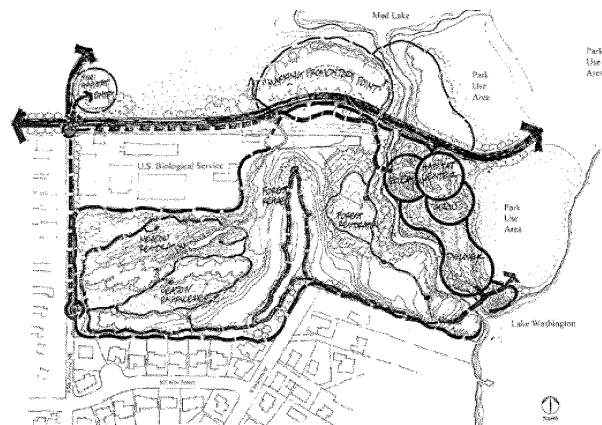
Action on next page

Action: The Commission appreciates the thorough presentation and recommends approval of the project as presented.

- The Commission supports the five interpretive display themes,
- encourages developing exterior exhibits and opportunities for active interpretation that will engage the visitor, and
- recommends development of displays that will appeal to young audiences.

010799.2 Project: **Promontory Point**
 Phase: Conceptual
 Presenters: Susan Black, Susan Black and Associates
 Layne Cubell, Sand Point Operations
 Lynn Ferguson, Sand Point Environmental Stewardship Committee
 Attendees: Sandy Fry, Starflower Foundation
 Jim Evans, Starflower Foundation
 Anne Strode, Department of Parks and Recreation
 Time: 1 hr.
 Project Type: Special Project - Neighborhood Matching Grant - DOPAR
 SDC Code: #273

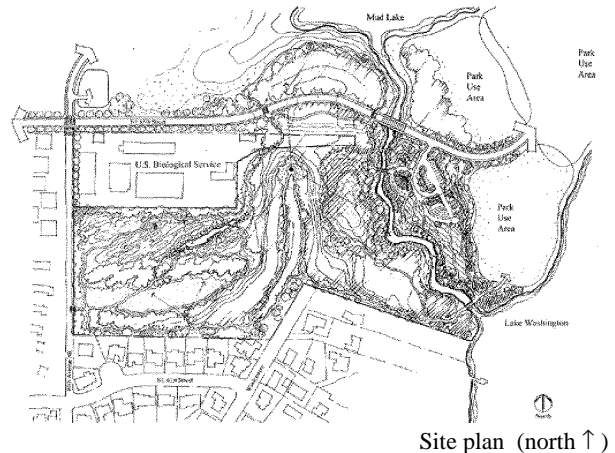
The Promontory Point Habitat Reclamation Project is a 15 acre site located in Magnuson Park south of NE 65th Street, between Lake Washington and 65th Avenue NE. The area used to be the rifle range and the site of the observation tower and radio transmitting signal beacon for the Sand Point Naval Air Station. The vegetation consists of second growth forest, non-native grasses, and some invasive plants. Informal foot trails wind through the site along with remnant service roads. The focus of the reclamation effort will be to use native plants to cultivate an urban habitat for birds and small mammals as well as to provide low impact community programs and educational opportunities.



Site analysis diagram

A coalition of natural habitat preservation groups is currently developing the Concept Master Plan for Promontory Point. The coalition is comprised of representatives from Seattle Audubon Society, Sand Point Community Liaison Committee, Sand Point Environmental Stewardship Committee, Starflower Foundation, Washington Native Plant Society, and several community members. The proposed plan for Promontory Point has not yet been included in the overall Magnuson Park Master Plan.

The initial phase of the project will include the removal of invasive plants and the installation of native plant species. The project will require \$200,000 to complete this phase and will rely primarily on volunteer groups. Later phases of work will be based on additional funding from a variety of sources including potential Department of Neighborhoods Grants.



Discussion:

Girvin: Is there a contingency plan in case the Mud Lake outlets are located elsewhere?

Black: The proposed outlet is a wetland independent of a Mud Lake water source. We plan to stop up the underground water outlet to enhance the wetland.

Ferguson: There is also a spring located near the existing wetland. The Interpretive Center is not part of Phase One, but is located between Promontory Point and Mud Lake to serve both areas.

Black: The proposed location has the least impact on the adjacent habitats.

Foley: The meadow seems like an alternative location for the Interpretive Center with access from 65th Avenue NE. It would keep vehicle traffic near the edge of the park.

Black: The adjacent neighborhood is opposed to locating the facility at the west end. The proposed location is on an existing parking lot which offers water access for small boats.

Batra: Is the south edge of the park fenced?

Black: Yes, the site is currently fenced on the south, west, and north edges. We hope to lower the west fence to 42 inches high.

Batra: \$200,000 is probably not enough to deal with water storage or contaminated soil issues that may arise.

Black: The \$200,000 for Phase One does not include below grade research. It will support volunteer efforts on labor intensive projects such as removal of invasive plants, native plant work parties, and blinds for the bird habitat.

Batra: This is an exciting project. Who will maintain the habitats?

Black: It will be an ongoing demonstration project with five volunteer organizations.

Foley: How important is the Interpretive Center, would the project be successful without it?

Black: Yes. The Interpretive Center is not intended to be a major element. It will be a simple shelter with educational information kiosks. It will mark an entry point and will provide shelter for large groups.

Foley: The Interpretive Center will have an impact on the surrounding habitat. It may be

possible to keep the parking area near the existing boat launch with the Interpretive Center entrance farther away from the wetland. I encourage a closer look at the size and location of the Center.

Cubell: It is important to remember that the Interpretive Center may also be located elsewhere in the overall Master Plan for Magnuson Park.

Layzer: This project is a great opportunity to use existing resources and will add a nice compliment to the other park activities. I like the transitional buffer between active use and passive use. I encourage the use of small kiosks that inform and welcome visitors and I hope this project gets included in the Master Plan.

Darwish: Does the small lake in the meadow already exist?

Black: It is an existing perched water table. It may be the result of extensive military use and unknown impervious materials underground. It may or may not be considered part of the natural habitat. Later underground research will address those issues.

Cubell: The whole site has significant drainage issues to deal with.

Sundberg: It seems critical that this project be included in the Magnuson Park Master Plan.

Cubell: It is currently an unused piece of Magnuson Park that serves, in effect, as a neighborhood park. The topography suggests two sites separated by Promontory Point. A different approach would be to cultivate another kind of use at the east end. The site will be studied further in the overall Park Master Plan.

Action: **The Commission appreciates the presentation and supports the project as an appropriate use of a unique and isolated area in Magnuson Park.**

- **The Commission encourages further integration of activities with the entire park, and**
- **recommends consideration of the plan as part of the Sand Point Master Plan.**

010799.3 Project: **Commission Business**

Action Items:

- A. MINUTES OF DECEMBER 17TH MEETING: Approved as amended.

Discussion Items:

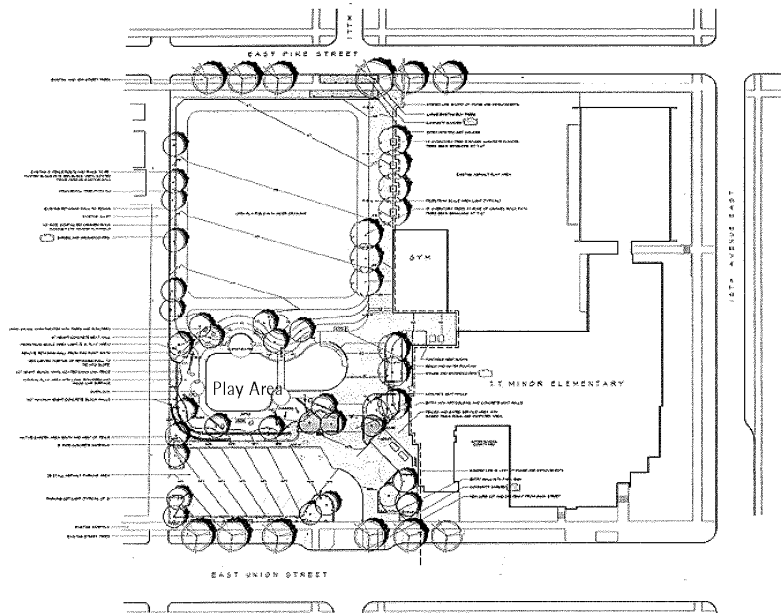
- B. MUNICIPAL CENTER OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE: The design team for the Municipal Civic Center Master Plan held a one day community workshop on December 18th that focused on programming and outdoor space. The Commission will review the master plan at the January 21st meeting.
- C. MEADOWBROOK SCOPING: Walls reported.
- D. LIBRARIES: Commissioner Rick Sundberg attended the Library Board of trustees meeting on 1/5.
- E. LIGHT RAIL REVIEW PANEL DEIS BRIEFING: A briefing on the Sound Transit Light Rail DEIS is scheduled for January 12th.
- F. WSCTC EXPANSION PROJECT SCHEDULED FOR JAN. 21ST: The MOHAI and Eighth Avenue tunnel portions of the WSCTC Expansion Project will be presented at the January 21st Design Commission meeting.
- G. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH PROCESS: Candidates have been chosen for a final round of interviews. Two candidates will attend a Commission meeting and a discussion forum on January 21st. A third candidate will attend a half-day Commission meeting and discussion forum on January 28th.
- H. DESIGN COMMISSION SPECIAL ADDITIONAL MEETING, JAN. 28TH: The Design Commission will convene for a half-day meeting to review projects and interview for the Executive Director position.
- I. ESA/ SUSTAINABILITY: Mary Beth Binns briefed the Commission on the DCLU environmental program in response to the Endangered Species Act. DCLU staff are assessing how land use and sustainability practices effect the salmon habitat.
- J. CENTRAL AREA GATEWAY WORKSHOP: The first of two workshops has been planned for February 6th and the Design and Planning Commissions are invited to attend.

010799.4 Project: **TT Minor**
 Phase: Design Development
 Presenters: Don Bullard, Parks and Recreation
 Dale Nussbaum, Allworth Design Group
 Time: .75 hr.
 Project Type: CIP 441/WC520, 445/WC325
 SDC Code: #389

The TT Minor project is divided into two phases. Phase one, to be constructed in June of 1999, consists of an open play field, a smaller play area with equipment, and a new parking lot. Phase two consists of basketball courts, smaller sport courts, and raised garden beds. The basketball courts can also be used for overflow parking during special events. The two phases are linked by a north and south promenade lined with large trees.

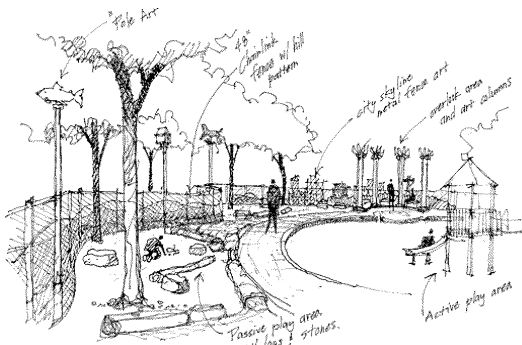
Phase one is currently being developed, while phase two is currently unfunded. In response to previous Commission comments regarding the parking lot access location, the design team plans to shift the parking entry to the west in order to reuse an existing curb cut.

The informal edge spaces around the children's play area have been modified to include a small grass amphitheater, rocks and logs for informal play, and art opportunities on the fencing and paving. The trees around the play area will be pruned for visibility and the ground will be covered with wood chips. Paving patterns in the north-south promenade may include student-made tiles.

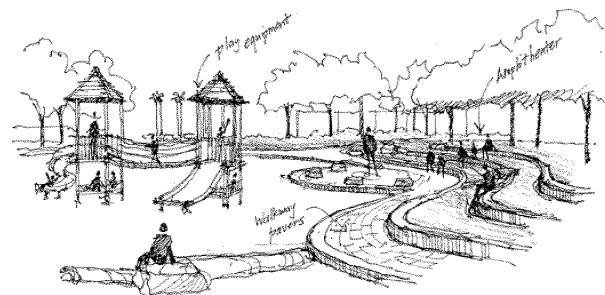


TT Minor plan (north ↑)

The project has received support from the Seattle Police Department and the community.



Sketch of informal play area



Sketch of west end of play area & "amphitheater"

Discussion:

- Layzer:** The development of passive edges around the children's play area, with informal play opportunities, is an important improvement.
- Nussbaum:** We are excited about the opportunities for exploratory play in the unprogrammed areas.
- Foley:** What is the estimated cost of the earthwork and soil removal?
- Nussbaum:** The soils currently at the site are high quality and we plan to export what is removed to other park sites. It will be costly, but will result in a more open and safe site.
- Foley:** Is there a potential for relocating some of the removed soils elsewhere on the site?
- Nussbaum:** We would like to relocate as much as possible. It would be great soil for the playfield. We may raise the field a few inches with a layer of removed soil just to reduce costs.
- Darwish:** Is the parking entry also the service vehicle entry?
- Nussbaum:** Yes. Trucks will pull into the parking lot and back into the loading dock at the west end of the school. The parking lot will be designated for teacher parking to reduce in and out traffic.
- Bullard:** There are typically three delivery trucks per day at the school.
- Darwish:** Can the tree east of the parking entry be moved for increased visibility?
- Nussbaum:** The tree is an existing large Red Maple. The limbs begin approximately ten to twelve feet above the ground. We plan to shift the parking entry approximately ten feet to the west in order to reuse an existing curb cut. Visibility shouldn't be a problem.
- Girvin:** The parking lot appears to have a significant slope. Is there any way to reconfigure the lot with gentler slopes?
- Nussbaum:** Unfortunately the parking lot has to connect to existing grades at each end. There may be an opportunity to reduce the slope once the parking entry is shifted to the west. We will reevaluate the parking configuration in an effort to reduce the slope.
- Batra:** Will the site be open at night?
- Nussbaum:** The site will be open during typical park hours. It will not be gated.
- Sundberg:** This project is a fabulous neighborhood improvement.
- Action:** **The Commission recommends approval of the project as presented in design development and appreciates the design team's efforts to incorporate previous Commission recommendations. The Commission recommends exploring ways to reduce the slope of the parking lot.**

010799.5 Project: **Experience Music Project**
 Phase: Site Visit
 Presenters: Paul Zumwalt, VNW
 Time: 1.5 hr.
Project Type: CIP
SDC Code: #105

The Commission was given a tour of the Experience Music Project currently under construction at Seattle Center.

